Editorial

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The future of city tourism

Growth of city tourism

Since the rise of mass tourism in the 1960s, city tourism has consistently been one of the fastest growing segments of the travel phenomenon in countries with developed economies (Ashworth, 1989; Jansen-Verbeke, 1986; Law, 2002; Maitland and Ritchie, 2009; Selby, 2004). International transit arrivals worldwide are expected to reach 1.4 million by 2020 and 1.8 billion by 2030 (UNWTO, 2016). Over the period 2007-2014, worldwide the number of city trips increased by 82 per cent and reached a market share of 22 per cent of all holidays, according to the latest official statistics (IPK International, 2015/2016, p. 8). Together with a sustained growth in city tourism, cruise tourism has skyrocketed with 248 per cent, while sun, sand and relaxation holidays increased by 39 per cent, and tours showed a steadier growth pace of 21 per cent during these eight years. The growth of city tourism is experienced both by developed and emerging economies. In 2014 the market share of city holidays was 21 per cent in Europe, 17 per cent in North-America, 25 per cent in Asia-Pacific and 22 per cent in Latin-America (IPK International, 2016).

Drivers of city tourism

The substantial growth of city tourism is driven by spatial, social, economic and technological forces. Worldwide urbanisation processes lead to increasing numbers of people living in cities, and feeling more connected with cities and an urban lifestyle, consequently this means more people seek out to visit other cities (ETOA, 2014). The increased wealth of the middle class in the western economically developed countries, and also in the emerging economies allow people to visit and explore other cities. This is facilitated by several other developments. First, decreasing travel costs, largely fuelled by the fast rise of budget airlines, and the availability of low cost accommodation (Dunne *et al.*, 2010; IPK International, 2013, 2016; UNWTO, 2014; Veille info Tourisme, 2014). Second, advancements in ICT and other such technology, play a role. They support marketing and promotion of cities and facilitate online booking of travel and accommodation (AirBnB). As a consequence of these developments, cities are no longer perceived as mere entry, embarkation- or transit points during a journey, but as attractions and destinations in their own right (ETOA, 2014).

Implications of city tourism for cities, tourists and residents

The growth of city tourism is reflected in four interrelated processes: the presence of tourists; the desire, by local authorities or enterprises to welcome tourists in their territory; the rejection of tourism (i.e. a negative attitude towards tourism); and a tourism "gaze" through which the world is interpreted (Stock, 2007).

Thus, the economic and socio-spatial implications of city tourism are significant. At global, national and regional level city tourism has become an important economic driver. Nationally, it outperforms both tourism to countries as a whole, and GDP growth (Roland Berger, 2012). Regionally and locally, city tourism is considered to be an incubator of innovation and technology (Terzibasoglu, 2016) and a key factor in the urban economy and city development: it creates jobs, stimulates foreign exchange through revenues and taxes, and promotes investment in infrastructure and the provision of public services (UNWTO, 2012). Other researchers stress the

increased awareness for heritage and culture and even the contribution to tolerant and respectful societies (Brooks, 2016; Terzibasoglu, 2016). A study among more than 2,600 residents in Copenhagen, Berlin, Munich, Amsterdam, Barcelona and Lisbon reveals that what residents value most is the positive atmosphere, liveliness and international vibe tourism brings to their city, along with the protection and restoration of historical parts of the city and traditional architecture (Koens and Postma, 2017).

It is crucial, however, to offer constructive critiques: the growth of tourism and the influx of tourists in more and more residential areas, for example (i.e. by AirBnB) impacts upon the spatial quality and the quality of life of the citizens, especially in historic city centres. Historic city centres are the areas that show the densest concentration of tourists (García-Palomares *et al.*, 2015). Research shows that AirBnb can freely expand in historic city centres, where regular hotel and hospitality industry is limited by zoning plans and regulations by authorities (Zervas *et al.*, 2014). This expansion of AirBnB has the potential to aggravate crowding and tourism gentrification (Gutiérrez *et al.*, 2017). Some researchers debate the on-going "festivalisation", "touristification" of urban space, and the "heritagisation" of city centres that allow tourists to experience the "urban-ness" of a city as a total experience (Stock, 2007). Perspectives of "touristification and disneyization" (Bryman, 2004, p. xx) of cities might question the staged authenticity of urban environments and triggers further debates on suitable capacities of tourism for cities (Vinello, 2017). Gentrification (e.g. Opillard, 2017), lowering housing supply by increasing rents and real estate prices (Gurran and Phibbs, 2017; Peters, 2017) and lowering quality of life for local residents (Gravari-Barbas and Maria Jacquot, 2017) are documented effects of urban tourism. Recently, reports and cases were presented where locals in cities like Barcelona, Salzburg or Venice actively protest against this massive influx of tourists in their cities (such as Kettle, 2017) (Venezia, 2017; ORF, 2017; Rodriguez, 2017). One of their main claims is that increasing numbers of day-trippers generate an unsustainable increase in real estate prices, causing gentrification and displacement of citizens – asking, to whom belongs the city? If certain numerical thresholds are exceeded, tourism can easily turn into a nuisance for residents due to increased prices, improper tourist behaviour, transformation of residential areas into tourist accommodation zones (AirBnB), visitor pressure on carrying capacity of sites, and crowding, such as in Amsterdam, Venice or Barcelona (Koens and Postma, 2017).

Challenges ahead

Overall, globalisation and economic changes have led to a "creative turn" in urban economy (Florida, 2005), demonstrating a shift from manufacturing towards services and knowledge related and "creative-industry" production. Tourism has been a popular agenda in urban policy for a long time, as a sector that was comparatively easy to promote with little public investment necessary apart from reshaping urban spaces and city marketing action (Colomb, 2011). Yet, the change in the urban economy has pushed tourism to the top of the urban policy agenda, city marketing and place marketing have been introduced as urban policy tools to brand cities and places strategically (e.g. Erikkson *et al.*, 2015).

Some authors, however, critique these approaches which ascribe value to cities as monetary generating units (Harvey, 1988), that branding and festivalisation bears the risk for "karaoke architecture" (Evans, 2003), and that those approaches underestimate and oversimplify the complexity of urban planning in its specific policy context (Braun, 2012). Those debates closely relate to a more general discussion, questioning which type of urban development and urban character should be prioritised. Tourism is not a standalone phenomenon that can be separated from its urban context. Its different forms and distinct practises mingle with "regular" urban practises such as housing, leisure, mobility, consumption and productions (Colomb and Novy, 2017b). Hence, the boundaries between touristic and non-touristic urban practises are fuzzy, fluid and overlapping. Moreover, tourism changes and transforms cities and urban spaces and vice versa – these transformations are not always desirable from the residents' point of view.

It is expected that city tourism will continue grow in the years to come (Bock, 2015; IPK International, 2016) and cities will face enormous challenges to manage the development of tourism and its implications (Inayatullah, 2011). At the 5th Global Summit on City Tourism which took place

in November 2016, Terzibasogly, director of the Destination Management and Quality Programme at the UNWTO, claimed the following. If tourism is recognised as an important force of urban change, this requires long term policy, planning and good governance in which tourism is integrated and the complex realities of tourism with its possible nuisances in the city and the hinterland are taken into account (Terzibasoglu, 2016). To meet the needs, demands and expectations of residents as well as (future) visitors, cities have to adapt and transform continually, while new challenges and issues emerge (Bock, 2015; UNWTO, 2012). Both opportunities and challenges of city tourism need to be addressed and managed in a collaborative process with the related stakeholders and citizens (Kester, 2016; Terzibasoglu, 2016). Daffara (2011, p. 681) calls cities to actively rethink their future to build capacity to act with foresight, and to co-create resilient and liveable places rather than just react to the "expected tsunamis of change".

Academic contributions

Despite the major importance of city tourism and the challenges surrounding it, academic research into this area has emerged only recently. Before the 1980s, tourism research appeared to have a strong "rural bias", but since, the interest has gradually increased (Ashworth, 1989). The growth in the practice of city tourism has been followed by increasing academic interest in this phenomenon and urban tourism has emerged as a multi-disciplinary field of studies whereby tourism researchers focus on development, management and marketing aspects in city tourism (Maitland, 2006; Jansen-Verbeke and Van Rekom, 1996; Koens and Postma, 2017; Page, 1995; Timur and Getz, 2008), and geographers show interest in planning considerations for cultural tourism in cities (Russo and Van der Borg, 2002) as well as paying attention to environmental factors and economic implications of city tourism (Law, 1992, 1993, 2002), and the effects of mega-events on cities (Viehoff and Poynter, 2015).

Although a variety of approaches have been adopted to study city tourism, the academic debate is still claimed to be fragmented and an incipient field of research and practice (Ashworth and Page, 2011; Novy, 2014; Pasquinelli, 2015): "those studying tourism neglect cities while those studying cities neglect tourism" (Ashworth, 2011, p. xx). Stock (2007) thinks that the neglect of tourism in urban studies is an obstacle to adequate thinking about cities. Some scholars address this gap by advocating the role of tourism and place branding as integral part of strategic spatial planning approaches und urban management (Francis and Mathooko, 2015; Oliveira, 2015; Bellini and Pasquinelli, 2016; Zenker and Braun, 2017). More recently, urban researchers started to investigate urban contestations triggered and related to tourism and tourism practises, such as civic protests against tourists and tourism. Those struggles do not often exclusively involve residents against tourists, but question which kind of urban developments and transformations are favourable for whom and who benefits or loses from such developments (Colomb and Novy, 2017a). Due to insufficiently robust academic research in city tourism, it does not come as a surprise that future oriented studies about cities and tourism are scarce (Bock, 2015; Füller and Michel, 2014).

This special issue

In this special issue of the Journal of Tourism Futures on the Future of City Tourism we aim to contribute to bridging the divide between tourism, cities and the future. The three editors of this special issue draw on areas of research in tourism scenario planning, cultural geography and critical tourism studies, as well as planning and urban studies to ignite debates about the future of city tourism. In this special issue our intention is not to propose a novel body of theory for city tourism as this has been proposed and discussed elsewhere (see, e.g. Paskaleva-Shapira, 2007; Pearce, 2001). The editors and authors in this special issue focus on the implications of growth in city tourism for the future wellbeing of cities, tourists and residents. In doing so the editors and authors take a critical approach in exploring and understanding future development of city tourism in the context of economically, socially and environmentally sustainable communities. The particular strength of the collection in this special issue is the inter- and multidisciplinarity bringing together of futurists, scenario planners, tourism researchers, geographers, urban planners and (landscape-) architects to tackle the future importance of city tourism.

This special issue includes four research papers and two viewpoint papers, debating the topic from different angles and methodological approaches. The first two papers illustrate how major external social and economic factors impact upon the development of city tourism. Griffin and Dimanche share their insights in how the hosting of immigrants by cities has a growing impact on how tourism is shaped. The immigrants shape new communities, change the local culture and contribute to an increase of VFR travel. The authors base their discussion on a literature review and a conceptual approach. Brauckmann investigates the potential effect of accommodation provision in the collaborative economy (AirBnB) on city tourism and urban property markets. He makes use of official statistics and geographical information systems to identify concentration processes of overnight visitors and the potential conflicts with other interest groups they generate.

Subsequently, two papers debate the citizens' and locals' perception of tourists and tourism in their city on empirical and conceptual level. Based on photo-elicitation interviews, Janusz, Six and Vanneste illustrate with a case study from Bruges (Belgium) how the residents' perception is affected by their socio-cultural context. Postma and Schmuecker clarify the mechanisms of conflict between residents and tourists. They propose a conceptual model to assess the impact of such conflicts on city tourism and suggest a framework to develop strategies and mitigate negative tourism impacts for the residents. The outcomes could support cities with the management and controlling of tourism development.

Sommer and Helbrecht show how the destination management organisation in Berlin sees conflicts related to tourism in practice. They focus on the political process of how conflict-prone urban tourism is administratively problematised and affects the future development of tourism.

Finally, Bevolo discusses how the experience of a city can be enhanced with the help of design, more specifically the design of spatial concepts and scenarios. By means of grounded theory he demonstrates how editorial products and design concepts were used to envision urban futures by Royal Philips BV for two decades.

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